

Oswego Public Library

Request for Proposal

Strategic Planning Facilitator/Consultant

February 2022

A. Objective

The Oswego Public Library seeks a consultant who will assist our organization in creating a strategic framework for the future. We are committed to undertaking a strategic process that will actively engage our organization in thinking about the future and planning for the sustainable delivery of the programs and services our membership expects.

B. Deadline for Receipt

Proposals must be received via email before 5 p.m. EDT, May 2, 2022. Proposals should be addressed to Edward Elsner, Interim Director, Oswego Public Library and emailed to eelsner@ncls.org

C. Inquiries

Inquiries must be made via email. Please address all inquiries to: eelsner@ncls.org
Telephone inquiries will not be addressed. Answers will be provided within 5 business days. All questions must be received no later than March 10, 2022.

D. Background

Library Visits (July 1 - June 30)

2015 - 78,459	
2016 - 80,063	
2017 - 71,699	
2018 - 68,333	11.4 FTE staff
2019 - 64,681	12.6 FTE staff
2020 - 40,613	12.0 FTE staff 3 1/2 months pandemic
2021 - 0	8.3 FTE staff 12 months pandemic
2022 - 15,581	6.7 FTE staff plus open Director position

165 years open at 120 E 2nd St, the Oswego Public Library is a traditional library in a unique historic building. A large addition to the historic library and a new interior for the

original building were finished in 2008 giving us 24,000 square feet of space. Extremely visible location near downtown and on top of a hill provides opportunity to publicize both the library and its services. Taxing and serving the Oswego City School District of 32,000 residents, the library has a steady support of \$1.4 million that includes debt service of almost \$400,000 a year. The most successful programs are story times during the school year and Summer Reading from the beginning of July to mid-August. Future plans are to invest in late elementary, middle school, and high school programming including a new teen area on the main floor of the addition. Outreach began during the pandemic taking materials to several senior citizen apartments in the service area and doing virtual visits to 8th grade English classes.

There is an active Friends of the Library group that has held events from crafts to 18 holes of mini golf in the library. The Oswego Public Library works with the City of Oswego, CiTi BOCES adult education, river's end bookstore, the YMCA, the Oswego Bookmobile, and the Children's Museum of Oswego. Many local businesses donate money and gift certificates to the Summer Reading program.

From our website:

Founded by [Gerrit Smith](#) in a July 17, 1853 letter, the library was built in the grand style of Norman castles during 1855 & 1856, and first opened to the public on June 14, 1857. The Oswego Public Library underwent a \$6 million renovation from 2004-2008 and has continued serving all area residents from the Castle on the Hill. The Oswego Public Library is also a national historic landmark and America's oldest public library still in its original building.

Mission Statement

“Oswego Public Library: Read, Learn and Grow“

The Mission of the Oswego Public Library is to be the learning center for the Greater Oswego area and the place people turn to for the discovery of ideas, the joy of reading and the power of information. Community needs drive our services. We believe that library services should be delivered in a welcoming, convenient and responsive manner.

Our library serves the City of Oswego and the towns of Oswego, Scriba and Minetto.

E. Scope of Work

The Oswego Public Library is seeking an experienced professional facilitator to perform the following:

1. Facilitate the strategic planning process using a methodology effective for public libraries.
2. Gather data through community research that focuses on library users, non-users, and stakeholders, including Board and staff, to identify Library needs/wants.
 - a. Community engagement is a key component of this planning process. This should be a collective process involving all the various community stakeholders, to develop a sense of the community vision and shared purpose for the Library's future including both current users and non-users, and may include:
 - i. Community meetings, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and other standard needs assessment methodologies.
 - ii. Formal and informal surveying instruments
 - iii. Online surveys
 - iv. Other methods as identified by the consultant.
3. Facilitate planning meetings and input sessions (public, Board, and staff sessions).
4. Review the current values, mission, and vision statements and facilitate revisions if needed.
5. Identify service priorities, goals, objectives, and activities.
6. All raw and summary data is to be delivered to the Oswego Public Library at the conclusion of the planning process.

F. Proposal Content Requirements

1. A cover letter providing a brief description of the firm or individual name, address of consultant, telephone number, and email of principal contact person.
2. Executive summary of the highlights of the proposal, not to exceed one page in length, conveying the consultant's understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
3. A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their experience/expertise. If you plan to contract with a third party vendor to conduct the community research component, please identify the firm you plan to use.

4. A summary of the consulting firm's qualifications and relevant experience.
5. A work plan that includes a description of the methodology, tasks, timeline, and estimated total amount of time that would be spent on the project.
6. Exclusions or exceptions. Note any parts of the proposal that are beyond the expertise of the consultant or would be better handled by Library staff.
7. A schedule of costs that includes consulting, supplies, number of onsite visits, cost per trip, and other costs associated with the planning process. Costs for data gathering and analysis (community research component) must be listed separately.
8. References and contact information for three (3) organizations for which the facilitator has provided strategic planning services. A public library would be preferred as one of the three references.

G. RFP Standards and Selection Criteria

1. Oswego Public Library reserves the right to cancel the award of contract any time before the execution of the contract by both parties. The responding consultants bear sole risk and responsibility for costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal.
2. No Library Board or staff member shall have a financial interest in the proposal.
3. In cases of disputes over differences of opinion as to the services in the proposal, the decision of Oswego Public Library shall be final.
4. Oswego Public Library reserves the right to: ask for clarification in the proposal if the need arises; select a planning consultant based directly on the proposal; negotiate further with one or more respondents.
5. Oswego Public Library reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP.
6. The proposal will be evaluated by Oswego Public Library and will include the following criteria:
 - a. Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project.
 - b. Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects for public libraries.
 - c. Methodology and timeline for carrying out tasks in the scope of work.
 - d. Cost to complete the process.
 - e. Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget.
 - f. Positive experience and success in strategic and library planning; satisfactory performance record (references).

H. RFP and Planning Process Timeline

1. Proposals must be received via email before 5 p.m. EDT, May 2, 2022.
2. All questions must be received no later than March 10, 2022.
3. Consulting firm selected will be selected on or before July 1, 2022.
4. Strategic planning will begin on an agreed upon date.
5. A draft report/plan and executive summary are to be submitted to the Library Director in advance of the final deliverable date.